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FOR NEA/ELA, AF/E (GAREY)

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SUBJECT: ARAB LEAGUE RESPONSE ON RESTRUCTURING SOMALIA CONTACT GROUP

REF: A. CAIRO 382

[1](#)B. SECSTATE 16181

Sensitive but unclassified, not for Internet distribution.

[1](#)1. (SBU) Arab League Office of African Affairs Director Samir Hosni provided on March 4 the non-paper below detailing the Arab League's suggestions for restructuring the International Contact Group (ICG) on Somalia. The non-paper echoes points Hosni made verbally (ref A), emphasizing that international organizations should play a primary role in the ICG, namely that the UN representative should chair the ICG and that the UN, AU, and Arab League should together play a more active supporting role.

[1](#)2. (SBU) Begin text of non-paper (verbatim as provided in English):

March 2, 2008

Non-Paper

Remarks on the Proposals for strengthening the effectiveness of the International Contact Group (ICG)

1 - The League of Arab States (LAS) welcomes initiatives to strengthening ICG's capacity in order to let it generate solutions aiming at establishing peace and security in Somalia as well as facilitating its implementation.

2 - International and regional experiences demonstrated that no one possesses a magic wand to end the Somali crisis. There is much need of a more coordinated effort between international and regional organisations (UN, AU, and LAS, as well as EU and IGAD), and with the international and regional actors to bring an end to the long-standing crisis.

Plenary and Cluster Groups

3 - As the Somalia question is a permanent item on the Arab League Agenda, as well as on AU and UN agendas, maintaining a harmonised coordinated approach among them is a must to successful actions towards establishing a new peaceful Somalia.

4 - UN SRSG is well positioned to chair the ICG's meetings.

5 - A permanent working group of UN-AU-LAS might assist the UNSRSG in the preparations for the plenary.

6 - The presence of international organisations in all clusters is a necessity to avoid parallel initiatives or double efforts. A distribution of labor is needed but a division must be avoided.

Political Outreach

7 - The Arab League supports totally the AU initiative towards

Somalia (AMISOM), as an effective way to support the legitimacy of the TFIs and Transitional Charter.

8 - Achieving a cease fire arrangement, and paving the way towards credible elections in 2009 needs well balanced diplomatic efforts with all Somali actors.

9 - The Arab League Summit in Riyadh called for convening an all inclusive meeting gathering the TFG and the main political and civil actors in Somalia to help achieving national reconciliation, on the basis of the Transitional Charter. The Arab League is ready to fully coordinate its efforts in this regard with the ICG.

End text of non-paper.
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